

or bad parole and I am proud to be associated with a State that has aligned itself with good parole." The parole law of New York limits the case load per parole officer so that no such officer should be required to supervise more than seventy-five persons at one time. Financial difficulties at one time precluded a strict adherence to this provision and five years ago the number was 150 to 200 and is now 90. In a certain State the State-paid parole officer was called upon to supervise 800 parolees, and in another State there was no officer to supervise 2,500 parolees. The author emphasizes the importance of obtaining as parole officers men of education and previous experience in social work, and the necessity to attract a high type of person by a good salary. A record of five years showed

that 82.5 per cent. of parolees were not convicted of any crime whatsoever whilst they were on parole. In the same issue, W. C. Jones, Chairman of the Illinois Branch of Pardon and Parole, writes on *'Parole: A Five Years' Study*. He states that 72.87 per cent. of 2,440 persons paroled during 1934 successfully completed the parole period. He insists that the public must realize that parole is not clemency, it is not leniency, it is not discharge from prison, it is not a privilege granted a prisoner, but it is a condition imposed upon him for the protection of the public. It is not the right of the parolee but the right of the general public to apply the best method of release of prisoners. It is an extension of discipline after release adopted for the protection of society. W. NORWOOD EAST.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sexual Misery as a Population Factor

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—In most discussions on population an assumption is so readily made that it is never thought worth while to mention it: namely that the sexual impulse is so strong that it can always be counted on to function, given opportunity. The number of legitimate births is seen as the resultant of the extent to which opportunity (marriage) exists, on the one hand, and the extent to which its natural outcome is prevented by artificial means or biological sterility, on the other.

It is difficult to submit this assumption to critical analysis because so little "scientific" evidence, in the narrow sense in which that word is so often used, is available. Nevertheless, of recent years a great deal of information has come to light regarding the intimacies of married life, which although it has not been co-ordinated and tabulated may be fruitfully used in a tentative way.

Anyone in a position to review a considerable body of this evidence is driven to the conclusion that there is an effective proportion of marriages which are childless, or no longer fruitful, not because of birth control or biological sterility, but because sexual intercourse is not practised between the partners. Either it was never successfully accomplished, or it has become distasteful. These unhappy situations have their results in sublimation, infantile reversion, or nervous disorder, as the case may be. From the population point of view, the salient fact is that they are unproductive. Not only are they so in themselves, but their repercussions in extra-matrimonial love, divorce and separation tend to involve third parties in unions which, for financial or legal reasons, are likewise

unproductive of issue; while homosexuality (especially in women) thrives on the misfortunes of normal love.

In short, we have reason to believe that in civilized man the sexual impulse is not a blind force which, if adequately canalized and shielded from frustration, must, of necessity, lead to reproduction. On the contrary, in proportion as men and women are sensitive, refined and considerate, we must expect to find it ready to atrophy, or to transform itself into unproductive expression, if the obstacles placed in its path are too great.

And how great are the obstacles placed in its way by modern society, especially urban society! Sexual misery in marriage is one of the fruits of this state of affairs. If society will not combat it for reasons of pity, it may yet be forced to seek a remedy in its own interest.

It would be rash to attempt to assess the importance of this factor in the population problem. But there can be little doubt that it exists; and there can be no doubt that, to the extent to which it operates, it is dysgenic in its incidence.

ALEC CRAIG.

59 Oakwood Road,
Bricket Wood, Herts.

Nutrition in War Time

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—There have recently been references to the need for "equality of sacrifice" by all classes to avoid inflation. There are, however, a large number of families already so close to the margin of their physiological needs that further sacrifice might deprive them of the means to satisfy basic needs for food and warmth, and so endanger their health.